



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

August 18, 2006

Caree Vander Linden
USAMRIID Public Affairs
1425 Porter Street
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5011

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Construction and Operation of New U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) Facilities and Decommissioning and Demolition and/or Re-use of Existing USAMRIID Facilities at Fort Detrick, Maryland. CEQ # 20060333.

Dear Ms. Linden:

In accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above mentioned DEIS. The DEIS was prepared to meet the requirements of NEPA and to assess the potential environmental impacts that may result from the proposed Department of the Army project to construct and operate a new U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) facility.

The DEIS evaluated two Alternatives and the No Build scenario in detail. Alternative I consists of the construction and operation of the new USAMRIID facilities and decommissioning and demolition of the existing USAMRIID facilities on area A of Fort Detrick. Alternative II includes construction and operation of the new USAMRIID facilities and decommissioning and *partial demolition* of the existing USAMRIID facilities and *the re-use of the remaining* facilities on area A of Fort Detrick. The No Build Alternative assumes no new construction and USAMRIID would continue operating in its existing facility.

Both Alternatives I and II were found to fulfill the purpose and need of the Proposed Action. Both alternatives were also determined to have only minor impacts on the environment. However, Alternative II has been identified as the preferred alternative because it allows flexibility for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions to accommodate personnel in the renovated space of the existing USAMRIID, such as the stipulated creation of the Biodefense Center of Excellence at Fort Detrick.

Based on our review of the DEIS, EPA has rated the environmental impacts of the preferred alternative as "LO" (Lack of Objections). A copy of EPA's ranking system is enclosed for your reference. For more information on our rating guidelines go to: www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/comments/ratings.html. EPA agrees with the identified preferred alternative as Alternative II because it allows the re-use and/or renovation of existing



structures. EPA commends the Department on their efforts to incorporate Low Impact Development and Green Building designs in their plans to construct the new facility.

Should you have any question regarding this matter please feel free to contact Jamie Davis of my staff at 215-814-5569.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Arguto", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

William Arguto
NEPA Team Leader

enclosure

